

St. John's Emmenton 9:30

12/10/67

Prelude
Hymn (Stand on last stanza) 44
Call to Worship
Behold thy salvation cometh. The Lord shall cause
His glorious voice to be heard: and ye shall have
ladness of heart.
*Confession of Sin
*Assurance of Pardon
Responsive Reading #3 Page 557
Hymn 378
Scripture St. Matthew 2: 1-12
*Gloria Patri
*Apostles Creed
*Prayer and Response
Anthem
Offering, Response, Prayer
Announcements

PRAYER, SERMONS

*Hymn 252
*Sermon
Prayer and Lord's Prayer
*Hymn 99
*Benediction
*Threefold Amen

Calem Lamartine 11:00

12/10/67

*Processional Hymn 99
*Call to worship
Behold Thy salvation cometh. The Lord shall cause
His glorious voice to be heard: and ye shall have
ladness of heart.
*Confession of Sin
*Assurance of Pardon
Scripture St. Matthew 2: 1-12
*Gloria Patri
*Apostles Creed 106 11
*Prayer and Response
Anthem
Offering, Response, Prayer
Announcements

PRAYER, SERMONS

CHRISTMAS SERVICE 7:00 P.M. DEC. 17TH
OFFERING WILL GO TO GREENVILLE CHILD HOME

DEC. 31ST COMMUNION REV. NICK.
9:30 SERVICE

ELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS DEC. 17TH

*Hymn 91
*Sermon
Prayer and Lord's Prayer
*Hymn 123
*Benediction
*Threefold Amen

Call to Worship:

"And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed
and all flesh shall see it together for the mouth
of the Lord hath spoken it."
O Eternal God who dwellest in mystery and eternity
and are far beyond our thought and comprehension,
I rely Thou hast revealed Thy glory in the face of
Jesus Christ and hast given us the responsibility
to be sure that all flesh shall see it together.
Amen.

Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true
heart and confess our sins unto God our Father,
beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ
to grant us forgiveness, Let us all pray;

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

"There shall come forth a shoot out of the stump of
Jesse, and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon
him." "The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the
spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of know-
ledge of the fear of the Lord."

"He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide
by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he
shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for
the meek of the earth." Amen.

Advent Wreath; We light the first candle for HOPE,
We light the second candle for JOY, For Mary
brought forth her first born Son and laid Him in a
manger.

"O Hope of every contrite heart, O Joy of all the
meek, To those who fall how kind Thou art; How good
to those who seek.
Jesus our only Joy be Thou, As thou our prize wilt
be; Jesus be Thou our glory now, and through eter-
nity. Amen.

TRINITY CHARGE--THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Ralph C. Link, Pastor

Trinity Church, New Bloomfield 9:00 A.M.
Christ Church, Duncannon 10:30 A.M.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP December 6, 1970

The Organ Prelude
*The Hymn of Praise 93
*The Call to Worship
*The Prayer of Confession (Unison)
Most aware are we that all things have not
been accomplished that we are both slothful
in good and unlettered in thy word and that
our dismay is exceeded only by our apathy.
Too easily would we express the words begging
for forgiveness and thou knowest the truth of
our feelings that we are not really repentant
and we have not amended our ways. Therefore
O God--make us more aware of thy majesty and
more dependent upon thy counsel. Amen.
*The Kyrie
*The Assurance of Pardon
The Scripture----Matthew 2:1-12
*The Gloria Patri
*Hymn 96
The Pastoral Prayer
Announcements
The Receiving of Tithes and Offerings
*The Doxology
*The Offering Prayer and Lord's Prayer
Advent Wreath Lighting
The Hymn of Meditation Trinity 100 Christ 90
The Sermon----Advent Revelation:
"To The Magi"
The Sermon Prayer
*The Hymn of Response 116
*The Benediction
*The Threefold Amen
*The Postlude
*Denotes Congregation Standing

TRINITY CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

A congregational Christmas dinner will be held
this evening at 6:30 P.M. Please bring a
covered dish or two and your own table service.
An offering will be taken to go to the Perry
County Child Care Service.

CHRIST CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

This afternoon at 1:00 P.M. we will meet at
the church to decorate for the Christmas
Season. We will have our "Chrismon" Service
also. We will have ice cream and cookies
later. Come and join us.
COOKIES BRING SOME
Consistory will meet Monday at 8:00 P.M.

Hidelberg Fellowship Class will meet Tuesday
Dec. 8th at 7:30 P. M. at the church.

The Missionary Circle will meet at the home
of Mrs. Hester Steele Tuesday evening Dec.
8th at 7:30 P.M.

Esther Spease will entertain the "Win A
Chum Class" at the home of Marilyn Fisher
on Dec. 11th at 7:30 P.M. Claire Steele
will be the leader.

*BRING OR SEND REQUESTS IN ABOUT
ORGAN.*

*FAMILIES & LOT MEMBERS
CHURCH SAT. 9:30*

A Russian legend has it that an old woman who was at work in her house when the wise men came ~~xxxxxx~~ from the east on their way to Bethlehem. They said to her, "Come with us. We have seen his star in the east and go to worship him." She said, "I will come, but not now. I have much work to do and when that is finished I will follow and find him." But her work was never done and so she did not go. But she is still living and still searching for the child. And though she did not find him out of love for all of his children she takes care of them. It is believed that she fills all the stockings and trims the tree on Christmas morn. And the children awake and cry Baboushka has been here. The legend says, that because she did not find the child she believes that each little one she feeds and warms she may find the Christ child.

G. K. Chesterton wrote of three modern wise men. They each came to the city of Peace with their gifts. The first brought gold - cold and yellow which buys most of the pleasures of the world. The second brought the modern scent of chemistry with its power of drugging the consciousness, controlling the soil and the surplus population. The third brought myrrh - which symbolizes death; it was a fissioned atom which could turn any city into another Hiroshima. They met Joseph at the gate but he would not let them in. What could we possibly bring other than these things that buy and control they asked. He whispered in their ears and they all turned away. They had forgotten the child.

The Wise Men

Text Matthew 2:2

In our Scripture this morning we read about the arrival of the men we refer to as, "The Wise Men." The actual number of them is not given, not only in Matthew but it is not found in any other part of the New Testament either. In fact the only reference is found in Matthew. Early legend has it that there were twelve men who came to see Christ. We probably all have either been taught or heard that there were three wise men. This may or may not be true. The reason given for ~~the~~ this is because of the threefold gift which they brought to Christ. Maybe at this point we should clarify what may be misconceptions to some of us. To begin with many people think that the Gospels which are the books that tell the life of Christ were written while Christ was alive and while he was about the work which he did. This is not true. The Gospels were written after His death. The first Gospel written was Mark and it was written around 65 to 67 A.D. Then follows the Gospel of Matthew which was written around 80 A.D. The reason why nothing was written before this is because almost all of His followers expected Christ's ~~second~~ coming to take place shortly after His ascension. At least most of them expected it during their lifetime. Therefore they felt no need to have a written record. So they passed the life of Christ on by word of mouth. I think most of us are probably familiar with the game where a sentence is whispered in someone's ear and on down the line until it reaches the last person. Usually the last person's interpretation is unrecognizable from what was originally said. With the telling of a story the same thing holds true. Each time it is told someone adds a little embellishment here and a little there and before long the story is all out of proportion. Now I am not disputing the Bible. I still believe very firmly that these books were written by inspired men of God. But what I am saying is that perhaps some of these events may have become enlarged a little between the time they occurred and when they were written down. Such may have been the case with the story of the Magi. So let us just for the sake of argument agree the number of wise men was three. and let it go at that.

After all it really is immaterial whether there were three or a hundred. The important thing is that they came into the life of this child and left an impact upon Him.

This name, "Magi" which is given to these men is a very difficult name to translate. The Greek historian Herodotus relates that, "The Magi" were originally a Median tribe. The Medes were a part of the Persian Empire. They tried to overthrow the Persians and substitute the power of the Medes. They failed to do this. From that time on, "The Magi" became a tribe of priests and ceased to have any ambition for power. In Persia they were almost exactly what the Levites were in Israel. They became the teachers and instructors of the Persian kings. They were also in charge of the sacrifices and no sacrifice could be offered unless one of the Magi was present. Thus they became men of holiness and wisdom. They were also skillful in philosophy, medicine, natural science, soothsaying and interpreting dreams. Later on the name developed a lower meaning and meant little more than a fortune teller. But at their very best these men we are speaking of today were good men who tried to be holy and who looked for the truth.

The star these men followed is another mystery that cannot be solved. In those days everyone believed in Astrology. It was believed that the future could be foretold by the stars. It was also believed that a man's destiny was settled by the star under which he was born.

Around 11 B. C. Halley's comet was visible. Around 5 B. C. there was a conjunction or a meeting on the same longitude of Saturn and Jupiter. In the years 5 to 2 B. C. on the first day of the Egyptian month Mesori, the dog star Sirius rose at sunrise and shone very brilliantly. The name Mesori means, "The birth of a prince," and perhaps to these astrologers this star would mean the birth of a great king. These men were professionals at watching the heavens and something in the heavens spoke to them of the coming of a king. There is a legend told about the star that these men followed. It tells that after the star's work of guidance was completed it fell into the well at Bethlehem and

it is still there. It can still be seen sometimes but only by those whose hearts are pure.

The gifts which these men brought to the Christ child are significant also. Gold was the gift for a king. It was acclaimed as the only gift suitable for a king. Christ was and is ~~only~~ a King but he was also called, "The Prince of Peace". So being of royalty, gold was very appropriate as a gift to Him. Frankincense was a sweet perfumy incense that was used in the Temple worship and in the Temple sacrifices. This would be a gift suitable for a priest, and Christ was just that. The Latin word for priest is Pontifex and it means bridge builder. This is what Christ did. He built a bridge from man to God. He made it possible that man can come to God through Him. Myrrh was sort of a spice that was used in the embalming of the dead. This may seem like a rather strange and inappropriate gift to bring to a new born infant. But if we believe that Christ was the one who was to suffer and die for mankind, then this gift is not only appropriate but it is symbolic. This was a child that actually was born to die. These then were the gifts brought to Christ by these wise men. Gold for a king, Frankincense for a priest, and Myrrh for a Saviour. Legend has it that these men were named, Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar. Melchior was an old man with a long grey beard and it was he who brought the gift of gold. Caspar was young and beardless with a ruddy countenance and he brought the gift of frankincense. Balthasar was swarthy with a new grown beard and he brought the gift of myrrh. It is also said that Marco Polo went to Persia and tried to find out all he could about these wise men and he found out that there was a great difference in their ages. A man named Gascoyne Cecil tells a story of the visit of the wise men to Bethlehem. Quote, "When they came to the stable they went in one at a time. First the old man went in and he found an old man who talked to him. Next the middle aged man and he found a teacher his own age who spoke to him. When the young man went in he found a young prophet. They met together outside and marvelled, how was it that they had come to see a child but they didn't find a child but three different men of different ages? The old man had

found an old man, the middle aged had found a middle aged man and the young had found a young man. So they took their gifts and went in again and instead of finding three different men they found a baby. Each sees in Christ the reflection of his own condition."Unquote.

What can we bring to Christ and how will He appear to us?
 Will He seem to be an old man? Or young? Or middle aged? He will appear as the timeless, ageless, unchangeable Saviour if we come to Him and serve Him as we should. As to our gifts, what could we possibly give to Him? Christ doesn't want our possessions or our material goods. He wants us. Our selves, wholly and completely. This is the only gift we can possibly bring to Christ. The words of a familiar hymn state, "Living or dying Lord, I ask but to be thine: My life in Thee Thy life in me, makes heaven forever mine." Let us pray.

I was asked last Sunday if it was not true that the Jews also had a candle lighting observance near or during Advent. I did a little research and found that they do indeed. Their observance is called "Hanukkah". This is a holiday where the Jews celebrate the first great victory for religious freedom won by the Jews more than 2000 years ago. Judah Maccabee organized the Jews into an army and defeated the Syrian-Greeks. In case you have never heard of this Jewish History it is found in the Apocrypha, which is a collection of books not found in all Bibles. If you have an old family Bible at home perhaps you will find it there. Many old pulpit Bibles have it. Sometime in the future I shall preach a sermon using the Apocrypha for background. But getting back to this Jewish holiday, when Judah Maccabee finally defeated his enemies(it took 3 years to do so) he led his troops into Jerusalem. There they cleansed the Temple of all pagan objects of worship and made it fit to worship God again. Jewish legend tells that when they were cleaning out the Temple the men found only one jar of holy oil, only enough to keep the Eternal light before the Holy Ark burning for one day. Miraculously this one jar burned for eight days. Judah Maccabee proclaimed an 8 day holiday to celebrate the rededication of the Temple to God. The big event of Hanukkah is the lighting of the candles. Eight candles are placed in a candlestick called a Menorah. The father of the family lights one candle each night until finally all 8 candles are lit. This is done with the entire family present. Each time that the candles are lit a helper candle called a Shamash is used. This holiday is celebrated anywhere between the end of November through December into January. This depends upon the year. How this time is arrived at I was unable to ascertain. This year it is being celebrated between December 8 to the 15th. This is the year 5727 to the Jews.